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Mr. *Gay's*

TWO

DISCOURSES

Occaſioned by the DEATH of the

Rev. Dr. *Mayhew.*

To which is added,

A Character of the DOCTOR.

By another Hand.

e 63

A beloved Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt characterized.

IN A

SERMON

PREACHED

AT THE

WEST-CHURCH in BOSTON,

July 27. A. M. 1766.

The third LORD'S-DAY from the Deceaſe

of the Reverend Paſtor,

JONATHAN MAYHEW, D. D.

By *EBENEZER GAY*, A. M.

Paſtor of the Firſt Church in HINGHAM.

O Man greatly beloved! GABRIEL.

BOSTON:

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A beloved Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt characterized.

JOHN XXI. 20.

—The Diſciple whom Jeſus loved.—

HAPPY diſciple! bleſſed among men, and chriſtians; yea, among the holy apoſtles of the Lamb! How amiable a character is this? It ſpeaks the great worth, the ſingular excellence of one of the twelve, whom our Lord choſe to be his conſtant attendants in his public miniſtry, and dignified with an office of extraordinary privileges. John the evangeliſt, the penman of this goſpel, was the diſciple whom Jeſus loved; as we are told in v. 24. of this chapter. This is the diſciple which teſtifieth theſe things, and wrote theſe things, and we know that his teſtimony is true.—'Tis obſervable, that though this diſciple ſeveral times before had occaſion to mention one whom Jeſus

Jeſus loved, yet he does not inform us who he was; only by concealing his name, give occaſion to gueſs him. And perhaps it is not John himſelf that here telleth us who the beloved diſciple was. This ſeems to be done by other hands, the atteſtation being given in the plural number—'We know that his teſtimony is true.' It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the biſhops of Aſia did thus recommend to the churches St. John's goſpel, if, as *Euſebius* affirmeth, he wrote it at their entreaty. Is it not an argument of his modeſty, that when he had ſo frequent occaſion to ſpeak of the diſciple whom Jeſus loved, he ſhould not once name himſelf? He entertained ſo great a favour with all humbleneſs of mind, often acknowledging the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, without boaſting of his prerogative therein. There are many other things recorded of this diſciple, honorary to him, arguing his preference, in his maſter's regards, to many others. We always find his name in the catalogue of the firſt three of Chriſt's worthies, which were of ſpecial conſideration with him; Peter, James and John, who 'ſeemed to be pillars,'* which greatly ſupported and adorned the chriſtian church—were of the higheſt reputation in it, and thoſe 'very chiefeſt,' moſt eminent 'apoſtles,' whom Paul, when he became one, ſuppoſed he was not 'a whit behind,' tho' at the ſame time he confeſſed himſelf to be nothing.†

John

* Gal. ii. 9. † 2 Cor. xii. 11.

John was one of the three which our Saviour took for Witneſſes of his transfiguration, in which he received from God the Father honour and glory, which they ſaw, and heard the voice that came from heaven, when they were with him in the holy mount, which ſaid, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.'—* And whom he called out, and took into the garden of *Gethſemane*, as whoſe company would (if any means could) be a ſolace to him in his grievous agony.†—And whom he ſuffered (all others being forbidden) to follow him into the ruler's houſe, and ſee the performance of that great miracle of reſtoring his daughter to life.‡ Him, with his brother James, our Lord 'Sirnamed *Boanerges*, which is, the ſons of thunder.' § Signifying what powerful preachers they ſhould be of his goſpel, the great efficacy of their endeavours in their maſter's ſervice. But in theſe marks of Chriſt's reſpect to him, beyond what he ſhewed to moſt of his diſciples, John was not alone. Theſe things did not amount to what is ſaid of him in the text, diſtinguiſhing him from, and, in the greateſt privilege, giving him the preference to all the other apoſtles, even the chiefeſt of them: Tho' there was an equality betwixt them in office, yet there was a difference in perſonal accompliſhments, and certain prerogatives. And John's ſuperiority in his Lord's affections is plainly aſſerted

* Mat. xvii. 5. † Mat. xxvi. ‡ Mar. v. 37. § Mar. iii. 17.

aſſerted here, tho' Peter's ſupremacy of power is vainly by ſome contended for; and if it could be proved, yet the former is the more deſirable privilege. Who would not chuſe to be called *the diſciple whom Jeſus loved*, rather than the *vicar of Chriſt?* Jeſus indeed loved all his diſciples. He loved all men. Out of hearty good will to mankind, he came into this world, and lived and laboured, ſuffered and died for their ſalvation. He particularly loved his own diſciples, the twelve, whom he choſe to be his prime miniſters, with whom he converſed more familiarly, whom he inſtructed more fully, and prayed for with more than ordinary tenderneſs and concern. Of the twelve, three were diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſpecial tokens of Chriſt's favour to them? and of the three, John was the diſciple whom Jeſus loved, with a ſtill more peculiar affection; which might be (in part) manifeſt by his receiving him into his boſom, the place of love and intimacy; as is mentioned in this verſe, 'the diſciple whom Jeſus loved—which alſo leaned on his breaſt at ſupper, and ſaid, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?' referring to that paſſage in John xiii. 23.—'Now there was leaning on Jeſus boſom one of his diſciples whom Jeſus loved, Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he ſhould aſk who it ſhould be of whom he ſpake, when he ſaid that one of them ſhould betray him.' 'Tis obſervable, that Peter, who, upon moſt, if not all other occaſions,

ſions, was ready to ſpeak firſt, and be the mouth of the diſciples, ſhould not himſelf aſk our Lord this queſtion for the diſcovery of ſuch a ſecret to them, about which they were in great doubt and anxiety, but deſired John to aſk it, as knowing that he was the diſciple, which was neareſt and moſt intimate to their maſter; had a ſpecial intereſt in, and a ſpecial confidence with their Lord; who might before, and in other ways, have declared a ſpecial regard to him. "Jeſus ſaid to his diſciples, John xv. 15. henceforth I call you not ſervants, for the ſervant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my father I have made known unto you." He received and treated them all as friends, but John as his boſom-friend, with peculiar endearment of affection and intimacy; of which his placing him next to him at the table, on his right hand, in a reclining poſture, might be ſome token. But, tho' there was a diſciple whom Jeſus, in the days of his fleſh, thus loved, yet my hearers may be ready to ſay what is that to us? There was but one ſuch among the bleſſed apoſtles: he was a non-ſuch. Hath there ever been the like ſince? Is this a character proper to be emulated, or poſſible to be attained? I anſwer, that ſuch as John was, ſuch ought every man to deſire and endeavour to be, 'the diſciple whom Jeſus loveth;' his favorite and darling—to have a ſpecial intereſt

tereſt in his gracious regard, a chief room in his affection, which now, in his exalted ſtate, is as ſtrong to his diſciples, as it was in the days of his fleſh. And there may be the diſciple whom Jeſus loveth, if not equally, yet with peculiar tenderneſs, as he did John. And, if you are willing to hear, I now come to tell you who he is; and to deſcribe him ſo, as that he may be as certainly known as if his name had been in the text. Only let me deſire you to bear this in your minds, that he is a ſincere diſciple of Jeſus whom he loveth with ſuch a kind of love, tho' he may not to ſuch a degree, as he did John, i. e. a love of complacence,—a love in which the ſubject of it reſteth, and on which the object of it ſafely depends,—a love that is ſaving and everlaſting; and faileth not to make the perſon on whom it is fixed, compleatly and eternally bleſſed. The diſciple whom Jeſus loveth, in the ſenſe of the text, is one that hath ſo learned Chriſt, as to become like unto him in the holy image of God,—'that hath heard him, and been taught by him as the truth is in Jeſus, to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts, and, being renewed in the ſpirit of his mind, to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.'* For this maketh him truly amiable, and is attractive of Chriſt's ſpecial affection. It is the image of God reſtored to, and ſhining in the ſoul—his comelineſs put upon it, that

* Eph. iv. 21.

that maketh its beauty ſo perfect, as to be the object of his complacential love. He is a diſciple, not barely by profeſſion, but in truth and ſincerity, in heart and practice, and hath learned of him to live ſoberly, and righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world, whom Jeſus loveth with ſuch a love as he beareth to all them that ſhall be ſaved by him. But every ſuch diſciple is not one whom he loveth with ſuch affection, as to the degree of it, as he did John.—*The Diſciple, whom Jeſus thus loveth, is one who is diſtinguiſhed from others in the eminency of ſuch perſonal accompliſhments, as render a true chriſtian peculiarly amiable.*—One who, beſides the qualifications that conſtitute him a ſincere diſciple of Chriſt, which he hath in common and equality with others, is endowed with ſome ſpecial properties, or degrees thereof, which beautify and adorn him. He excels in ſome particular qualities, which are not only lovely in themſelves, but are ornaments ſetting off his other good qualities, making them, and himſelf ſhining with them, to appear more lovely.

I am here to ſhew what thoſe perſonal accompliſhments are, the eminency of which renders a diſciple of Jeſus peculiarly amiable. They are both of nature, and of grace: Such as he receives from the Father of lights, as the God of nature, and as the God of grace; from whom cometh down every good gift,

and every perfect gift, forming and beautifying a christian man.

1. Intellectual capacities and improvements, in a superior degree, make a disciple of Jesus the more amiable.

'There is a spirit in man', which is the noblest part of him, 'and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding'; which advanceth him above the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven. Reason was man's original excellence, the most eminent distinction and glory of his nature, by which he was fitted to contemplate the perfections, and celebrate the praises of his, and the world's almighty maker; and in which he resembled God, who is the supream and most perfect reason. The grace of God, by which a real christian is what he is, doth not destroy a reasonable nature, in its present lapsed state, but sublimate and refine it. It doth not obliterate, but exceedingly brighten, what remains of the natural image of God, since the fall. It restores reason to its government over the human passions, and directs it to its proper exercise. And by how much clearer and stronger the rational faculty is in any man, upon whom the renovating change is passed, by so much more excellent disciple may he be of Jesus Christ. Largeness of understanding, quickness of apprehension, soundness of judgment, depth and compass of learning, are

embellishments

embelliſhments of a ſanctified ſoul, and make a great difference between the ſubjects of regeneration. So far as a man's intellectual abilities and attainments are ſuperior to others, he may, upon his receiving of grace, out-ſtrip them, as a diſciple of Jeſus, and be advanced to a higher form in the ſchool of Chriſt. Theſe accompliſhments, as natural and congenite, or acquired by human ſtudy, are great ornaments to a man, and are not leſs ſo for his being 'renewed in knowledge after the image of him that createth the new man'. Then are they ſanctified, and made ſubſervient to grace and holineſs, and therefore are the more recommending. Great is the advantage he thereby hath to excel in all that is well-pleaſing in the ſight of the Lord, and to make his light ſhine before men with diſtinguiſhed luſtre. As a good man, they ſet him off to greater acceptance and eſteem.

Whether, in this reſpect, John had the preheminence among the diſciples, who were not men of letters, we cannot ſay: but he had viſions and revelations from God more than others, and his Goſpel, and the Apocalypſe, which he wrote, contain ſuch myſteries, that it is probable his mind might be peculiarly formed for the moſt ſublime ſpeculations. As to another, who was an apoſtle after John, the Spirit of God was pleas'd to reveal 'ſome things which are hard to be underſtood', be-

cauſe (perhaps) that he by the ſtrength of his reaſon, improved by an education at the feet of Gamaliel, might be more able to comprehend, teach, and defend them. However, this is certain, that for his deep knowledge in the things of God, and the excellent manner in which he wrote concerning them, John was by the Ancients called, THE DIVINE.

II. Good natural diſpoſitions, predominant in a diſciple of Jeſus, render him the more amiable. Man bears the image of his creator in his moral, as well as in his intelligent nature; and there are ſome ſtrictures of it remaining ſince his depravation by ſin. Notwithſtanding the woful diſorders which ſin hath introduced into our nature, there are ſuch properties of it, eſpecially as ſome have it, who never experienc'd the ſaving change of it, that are morally good, and from which it is ſtill denominated. *Good nature*; and they who have it in a conſiderable degree, are eſteemed and called, *good-natur'd* men. Modeſt, honeſt, frank, generous, gentle, courteous, condeſcenſive, benign, merciful diſpoſitions, appear to be natural and congenite to ſome individuals of the human ſpecies, and to be much cultivated and ſtrengthened in them by meerly human means. And they are, in their kind, and meaſure, good, beautiful, and beautifying—rendering the converſation civil and orderly, more becoming, pleaſant,

ſant, and beneficial in all ſocial vertues. We are charged in holy ſcripture, 'to be kindly affectioned'—to have a natural affection 'one towards another'*. The word imports affection, like that of parent-animals to their offſpring. Which ſuppoſeth inbred inclinations in men, which ſhould be excited, improved, and exerciſed by them. And ſo far as any natural diſpoſitions are good, they are lovely, and make the perſons in whom they are prevalent to be ſo, even in the eyes of Jeſus. According to the degrees of his image, who is the ſtandard of excellency, which perſons and things do bear, God himſelf eſteems them. Jeſus beholding the young man that came to him for inſtruction in the way to eternal life, *loved him* †, for thoſe amiable good qualities he diſcerned in him; tho' at the ſame time he told him, that he lacked *one thing* which was very eſſential to make him a true diſciple, and an heir of ſalvation, even a higher regard to Chriſt, and a treaſure in heaven, than to his great poſſeſſions on earth. If good natural diſpoſitions, as they may be found in the unregenerate, are ornaments to them, much more muſt they be ſo to a real chriſtian, after the ſanctification of the Spirit, and they are animated by chriſtian principles, and exerciſed by the direction of the chriſtian rule.

Some

* Rom. 12. 10. † Mar. 10.

Some have cauſe to be thankful for the advantage they have, in their natural make, to be truly virtuous and pious. Men of very different tempers become the ſincere diſciples of Jeſus. According to the prophecy and promiſe in Iſai. 11. 6. "The wolf ſhall dwell with the lamb, the leopard ſhall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion", &c. Such as are moroſe, churliſh, fierce, crafty, deſigning, cenſorious, and cruel, like the ſavage and venemous beaſts, ſhould be changed by the preaching of the goſpel, and made ſubjects of the Redeemer's peaceable kingdom, as well as thoſe who are naturally meek, gentle, tractable, ſimple, and harmleſs, as lambs and little children. But, although perſons of different complections of mind may be equally partakers of ſanctifying grace, yet, for all the change this maketh in their tempers, they may, in reſpect thereof, be more or leſs amiable ſaints. There is not ſuch an alteration in their ſpirits, but that their natural diſpoſitions uſually continue to be ornaments or blemiſhes to them. Grace planted on good nature, (as it is commonly called) is more graceful and pleaſant; than when it is ſo upon what is juſtly termed ill-nature, which it ſeldom (if ever) perfectly cureth in this life. Two chriſtians, between whom there may be little difference but what ariſeth from their natural tempers; one may

ſhine

ſhine ſteadily and exemplarily in holineſs and virtue, while the other is clouded with infirmities, and is oftentimes ſcarce free from ſcandal. Such inſtances frequently occur to obſervation in perſons who differ from one another chiefly (if not ſolely) in the natural mildneſs and frowardneſs of their ſpirits. Yea, a man may have a greater meaſure of knowledge and grace than another; and yet not out-ſhine him therein; the luſtre thereof in him being obſcur'd by his conſtitution. As was ſaid of one, 'that he was a man of great parts, great graces, and great infirmities, had grace enough for two men, and not half enough for himſelf'. 'Tis not improbable, that John, the diſciple whom Jeſus loved, was diſtinguiſh'd from Peter, and others, by a peculiar goodneſs of nature—gentleneſs of temper: if by his writings, eſpecially his epiſtles, we may form any judgment, or gueſs concerning it.

III. Certain ſpiritual graces, in a degree of eminence, render a diſciple of Jeſus the more amiable. He that hath learned Chriſt to ſaving purpoſe, hath put on *the new man*, and *is a new creature*:—is renewed in all his powers and faculties, and is endowed with all thoſe graces which conſtitute a real ſaint. Yet this renovation is but partial in the preſent life. The new and holy qualities which are introduc'd into the ſoul at converſion, in oppoſi-

tion

tion to the ſinful diſorders which there prevailed, are not in their perfection. Nor are they in every one to an equal degree to what they are in ſome: nor perhaps in any one are they all to the ſame degree. If any man were endowed with all graces, in a meaſure beyond what others are, doubtleſs he would be prefer'd in Chriſt's eſteem and affectionate regard before all. But, tho' there may no one who excels in all, he may be moſt loved who excels in moſt: or even that doth ſo in ſome particulars, which are eſpecially recommending, other things being equal, or not much inferior. So great may be a chriſtian's improvement and growth in ſome graces, tho' he may have no advantage therefor from any better natural temper than is in ſome others, as to excel therein, and be peculiarly amiable in the eyes of Jeſus.

The graces I would juſt mention as ſpecial ornaments of a diſciple of Jeſus, are meekneſs, humility, and love.——Meekneſs, as it is in a diſciple of Jeſus, is a grace or fruit of the Spirit, whereby he, out of a ſenſe of duty to God, and in imitation of Chriſt, moderates his anger; is ſlow to wrath, ready to forgive injuries, and quiet under afflictive evils. This is one of the firſt leſſons Chriſt ſets his diſciples to learn of him, † who taught it ſo plainly by his doctrine and example. And ſo

† Mat. 11. 29.

ſo far as any man is like him in this part of hi scharacter, he is loved of him. It is a principal ornament of a chriſtian; 'even the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which in the ſight of God is of great price.'* Angry and furious paſſion diſfigures the face of the new man: the meekneſs of wiſdom maketh it to ſhine, and adds a charm to every grace in the ſoul, and renders a chriſtian's whole deportment comely and agreable. A calm and ſerene, is truly a great, a generous, and godlike mind. To keep the ſpirit quiet and undiſturb'd amidſt all provocations to wrath, and ſtorms of adverſity, is the nobleſt atchievement. 'He that is ſlow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than he that taketh a city'‡. He is glorious therefore in the eyes of the Lord, who pronounceth him bleſſed †.— Humbleneſs of mind in a diſciple of Jeſus, is that gracious diſpoſition whereby he, from a ſenſe of the greatneſs, and holineſs, and goodneſs of God, thinks ſoberly of himſelf, his own endowments, acquiſitions, and performances; hath a lowly opinion of himſelf. He learns this virtue of his great Maſter, who was 'lowly in heart': and is thereby raiſed in his eſteem and affection, ſo as to be firſt named by him among the bleſſed‖. As our Saviour laid the

C foundation

* 1 Pet. 3. 4. ‡ Prov. 10. 32. † Mat. 5. 5.
‖ Mat. 5. 4.

foundation of his religion, in this ſpiritual grace; ſo he repreſents the perfection of it, as conſiſting in it; and declareth him that excelleth in humility, to be the greateſt, and the beſt chriſtian: 'Whoſoever, ſaith he, ſhall humble himſelf as this little child, the ſame is greateſt in the kingdom of Heaven *. Such a one is always mentioned in ſcripture with peculiar marks of the divine favour and approbation. This grace is neceſſary to, and introductive of, all other graces and duties of chriſtianity; and if the excellent beauties of all can meet in any one, it muſt be this: unleſs humility accompanies them, pride and vanity will ſpoil them. This adorns all other chriſtian graces and virtues. "It caſts a luſtre upon attainments comparatively low; while pride eclipſes the beauty of great excellencies" ——Love in a diſciple of Jeſus, is a grace of the holy Spirit, whereby a man, out of hearty reſpect to God, and our Saviour Chriſt, is diſpoſed to ſeek, and by all poſſible means to promote, the good and happineſs of others. Our goodneſs extendeth not to God, but unto our fellow-men. And our love to God, and Chriſt, if ſincere, will exert and ſhew itſelf in deſires and endeavours after the happineſs of all within the verge of our beneficence, in doing good, as we have opportunity, to all, eſpecially to thoſe of the houſhold of faith. 'The end of

* Mat. 18. 4.

of the commandment' (the main ſcope of the evangelical law) is declared to be 'Charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conſcience, and of faith unfeigned'. And chriſtians are exhorted *above all* other graces and virtues 'to put on charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs,' combining and conſummating them. The ſcripture-commendations of charity ſhew it to be a moſt excellent grace, and that from which other graces derive very much of their luſtre, and without which a chriſtian, with the tongue of angels, with the faith of miracles, and the courage of martyrs, would be *nothing*. Charity is an imitation of one of the brighteſt characters of the Deity, and advanceth a chriſtian to the neareſt reſemblance of God, who *is love*. It muſt needs therefore render a diſciple of Jeſus lovely in his eyes. He choſe it for the livery of his diſciples, becauſe it would moſt adorn, as well as beſt diſtinguiſh them *.—

Theſe graces are ſpecial ornaments of a chriſtian, and that the diſciple whom Jeſus loved did excel in them, may be probably infer'd from his writings, which breath ſo much the ſpirit of meekneſs, humility, and love.

Having thus ſeen the diſciple whom Jeſus loveth, let the IMPROVEMENT be,

1. To provoke a holy emulation; and move us earneſtly to deſire and purſue ſo great a

 privilege

* Joh. 13. 35.

privilege as any other of our fellow-chriſtians enjoyeth. We ſhould ſtrive every one to excel in thoſe things which render a true chriſtian peculiarly amiable. Our Lord always diſcountenanced and checked in his diſciples the affectation of ſuperiority in power, and worldly greatneſs, which he obſerved working in them. And indeed, the diſciple characterized in the Text, was not intirely free from it. He was not perfect in any grace, in which he might excel others. We read in Mar. 10. 35. 'That James and John, the ſons of Zebedee, came to Jeſus, ſaying, Maſter, we would that thou ſhouldeſt do for us whatſoever we ſhall deſire. And he ſaid unto them, what would ye that I ſhould do for you? They ſaid unto him, grant unto us, that we may ſit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left in thy glory'. i. e. in a temporal kingdom, in which they expected he would reign glorioufly, and deſired to be his chief miniſters of ſtate. Jeſus rebuked their aſpiring to any ſuch perferment in his kingdom, which was not of this world. And at the ſame time inſtructed them, with the other ten, 'who were moved with indignation againſt the two brethren', that there ſhould be no love of preheminence but in goodneſs: or, that which reſulteth from the performance of the moſt condeſcending offices of love; the which whoſoever ſhould beſt diſcharge, he would

would become greateſt and higheſt in the eye of God—in the eſteem and affection of Chriſt. So that, altho' he diſallow'd of ſuch ambition, as ſeeketh after authority and power over their brethren; yet he encourag'd ſuch as deſireth preferment in grace. This is a laudable ambition, to aſpire to the higheſt degrees attainable in chriſtian knowledge, holineſs, and vertue. It is very conſiſtent with, yea, proceeds from humbleneſs of mind. It argues a diſciple of Chriſt, not to be conceited of his endowments, whatever they be, but ſenſible of his deficiences, and what room there ſtill is for him to 'grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt': and the more he doth ſo, the humbler will he be in a ſenſe of his defects. St. Paul, after his converſion to, profited in the chriſtians, as before he did in the Jews religion, above many (if not moſt, or all) his equals in age and advantages, yet did not think he, had already attained, or was already perfect: but forgetting thoſe things which were behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe which were before, he preſſed toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus'*. No chriſtian ſhould reſt in his preſent attainments, how conſiderable ſoever, but ſtrain every nerve of his endeavours after greater, and every one ſtrive to

* Phil. 3. 12.

to out-ſtrip other in the race ſet before us. And what conſtraining efficacy thereto is there in the love of Chriſt? If Jeſus love us, happy are we, tho' the world hate us: which it would not do, had it not before hated him. *In his favour is life—his loving-kindneſs is better than life.*

II. We ſhould love the diſciple whom Jeſus loveth. His love is the meaſure, by which we ſhould regulate ours; and give thoſe the preference in our eſteem and affection, who, for their eminent good qualities and deeds, we may reaſonably judge have it in Chriſt's. Our love of the brethren ſhould riſe in proportion to the degrees of God's image which they bear; and we embrace with peculiar affection, and take the greateſt complacence and delight in thoſe whom Chriſt doth. 'O my ſoul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my Lord: my goodneſs extendeth not to thee, but to the ſaints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight'*. And as we ſhould delight in the company of the excellent ſaints, while they are with us on earth; ſo we ſhould piouſly remember them, when they are gone from us to Heaven. *The memory of the juſt is bleſſed.*‡ *The righteous ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance*†. To forget them ſoon, when abſent from the body, and from us, would argue the

* Pſ. 16. 2. 3. ‡ Prov. 10. 7. † Pſ. 112. 6.

the defectiveneſs of our love to them. The praiſes due from us to God for the eminent and uſeful gifts and graces with which he furniſhed and adorned them, require an affectionate commemoration of them.——Love prompts us to imitate thoſe on whom 'tis plac'd. It naturally leads us to reſemble them in thoſe amiable things that endear them to us; and this is our duty, after they are removed from our ſight. There ought therefore to be a loving remembrance of them; and they are never to be thought of, or mention'd, without due reſpect: eſpecially ſuch whom we were obliged to eſteem very highly in love for their works ſake. 'Remember them which had the rule over you, who have ſpoken unto you the word of God, whoſe faith follow. Conſidering the end of their converſation' †.

And this bringeth me to ſay, in how precious eſteem the late beloved paſtor of this flock is to be retained. He muſt be preſent to the minds of my hearers, while I was deſcribing the diſciple whom Jeſus loveth, and they may have obſerved ſome reſemblance in the principal lineaments of the portrait. We have all the reaſon which a judgment of charity requires, to remember and ſpeak of him, as a diſciple whom Jeſus loved. His good converſation in Chriſt is the ſolid ground of

† Heb. 13. 7.

of our hope concerning him, that he was one of thoſe whom our Lord condeſcends, in the moſt tender and endearing manner, to call his *friends* *. If he was miſtaken in any points of the chriſtian doctrine, (and is there a man nearer to us than Rome, who will dare to ſay, that he is not ſo himſelf) yet none have cauſe to impute this to his want of love of the truth, or neglect of impartial diligent inquiry after it, or pleaſure he had in unrighteouſneſs; and thence not to allow him room in the love of Chriſt and their charity, who by the conformity of his temper and life to the precepts of the goſpel, hath left us the moſt ſubſtantial proof of his ſincerity. DOCTOR MAYHEW was a man of uncommon worth; clearly diſtinguiſhed from the moſt of his brethren in the eminency of perſonal accompliſhments, which render one peculiarly amiable. More ſuch recommending qualifications met in him than are ordinarily to be found in one man, in one chriſtian, in one miniſter. His intellectual powers and literary attainments were very ſuperior. He had a genius capable of moſt conſiderable advances in every branch of uſeful learning, and was an excellent ſcholar. Our aſcended Saviour, who received gifts for men, to furniſh them unto the work of the miniſtry, did highly favour him with a large meaſure

* Joh. 15. 14.

ſure thereof, and honor him to do abundant ſignal ſervice therewith, in the cauſe of truth, liberty and religion, which I was going more particularly to mention, but ſo much hath been already better ſaid on this head, by thoſe who were more able to do juſtice to ſo great a character, that it becomes me to refrain my mouth from ſpeaking out of the abundance of the heart which overflows with affectionate regard to his memory. I only remark, that in thoſe things, be they greater capacities for, or articles of ſerviceableneſs to the intereſts of Chriſt's kingdom, wherein he excelled others, he did bear peculiar marks of honor, and was, on the ſuppoſition (which is reaſonable to be made) of his being a ſincere diſciple of Chriſt, diſtinguiſhed from them, in his maſter's regards, and ought to be remembered by us as the diſciple whom Jeſus loved.

And, my Brethren, the People of his charge, the great love you always expreſs'd to your Paſtor, will not ſuffer you eaſily to forget him. Your faithful memories will be often repreſenting to you, how amiable the dear man of God was in the brightneſs of his gifts, and luſtre of his virtues; in the regularity, and gravity, yet pleaſantneſs of his chriſtian converſation, and in the whole ſhining courſe of his ſacred miniſtrations among you.—A ſpecial help and advantage to your remembring of him, and how you

have received and learned of him, you have by his printed works, which are more than any miniſters in the land, of his ſtanding; and are more honorary and durable, than pillars of marble erected and inſcribed to his praiſe.——Some have thus paraphraſed Solomon's words, in Prov. 13. 9. "The light of the righteous rejoiceth." It ſhall burn clearly and pleaſantly, even when his life is put out here. By a due remembrance of him who was ſo burning and ſhining a light among us, we may longer ſtill rejoice in his light—have farther benefit of his excellent inſtructions, and example; and can we ever think, or ſpeak of him, and not be ready to adopt and apply the Angel's *encomium*, addreſſed to a prophet of old, O MAN GREATLY BELOVED?* But the ſweet remembrance of him, which love ſhould cheriſh and preſerve in us, to the honor of Chriſt who loved him, and made him ſo lovely, and to our own ſpiritual improvement, carrieth this ſadning thought in it that he is abſent from us: alas! is dead, and gone; and hath left us ſorrowing deeply that we ſhall ſee his face no more. The more Jeſus and we loved him, our loſs of him is the greater, and the more to be deplored. For,

III. The death of a diſciple whom Jeſus loved, ought, in a ſpecial manner, to be mournfully reſented. Our Lord having ſignified

* Dan. x. 19.

ſignified unto Peter, by what death he ſhould glorify God, viz. crucifixion; he aſked concerning the diſciple whom Jeſus loved, *What ſhall this man do?* § "Jeſus ſaith unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Then went that ſaying abroad among the brethren, that that diſciple ſhould not die: Yet Jeſus ſaid not unto him, he ſhall not die, but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" From this ſpeech of Chriſt concerning John they inferred, tho' it did not imply any ſuch thing, that he ſhould not die: but, being found alive at Chriſt's coming to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, which they tho't would be the end of the world, he ſhould, without paſſing thro' death, enter upon the ſtate of immortality, then to commence. But Chriſt did not ſay, he ſhould live till then; or if he had ſaid it, this would not have been to ſay, he ſhall never die; for he did live thirty years after that, even to Trajan's reign, in which he died. Chriſt's love to a diſciple of his, doth not exempt him from dying, it is conſiſtent with his dying much ſooner than John did; yea it may be the reaſon thereof: for it is his will and deſire that thoſe whom he loveth, ſhould be with him, where he is. It was ſaid of old, *They die young whom God loveth.* Tho' the truth is, neither love, nor hatred, is known by this. Yet, when one dieth

§ Verſe 21. Context.

whom Jeſus and we loved, eſpecially, if he dieth when his life is moſt deſireable and ſerviceable; our love to Jeſus, and to him will ſet a-float the ſprings of ſorrow in us for his death. Jeſus loved Lazarus, and wept ſo at his grave, as to occaſion the Jews to ſay, "Behold how he loved him!"*— The general lamentation for the death of Jeſus's friend, and our's in this place, ſheweth how he was beloved. We ſcarce ever obſerv'd an inſtance of mortality among us more regretted as a public loſs. Sorrow over-ſpread town and country. The land mourneth. No wonder that the mourning in this Place is like the mourning of *Hada-drimmon*. It is a moſt grievous loſs you here ſuſtain in the death of ſuch a miniſter; and in ſuch an age of life, when you might hope to enjoy him for many years to come. "Weep for yourſelves, and for your children." Be concerned that the Lord would ſhew you, wherefore he thus contendeth with you, and for what ſins of your's it may become you to judge yourſelves not worthy of him, whom the Lord hath taken away from you.—But mourn without murmuring. All that God doeth is right: His will is done; and your's muſt acquieſce in it. And ye are not to ſorrow as they that have no (or but ſlender) hope.

Becauſe,

IV. There

* Joh. xi 36.

IV. There is ſtrong conſolation for mourners, in the death of a diſciple whom Jeſus loveth: Even this, that death hath not ſeperated him from the love of Chriſt; but brought him rather into his boſom, and lodged him in the embraces of his everlaſting love. And this comfort, to a great degree, have the mourning Relatives and People of the dearly beloved man, departed from them, to be with Chriſt, which is far better for him, though that he ſhould abide ſtill in the fleſh ſeemeth more needful for you. Indulge not to immoderate grief — be not ſwallowed up of over-much ſorrow, but conſider him as wrapt into the joys of Paradiſe, where (we have ground to hope) he is with Chriſt; and love teacheth us to rejoice with them that rejoice.

And now, will not Jeſus that loved him, continue his loving kindneſs to the bereaved family? Sympathize with, and graciouſly ſupport the ſorrowful Widow?— ſend the Comforter which only can relieve her ſpirit?

He will ſhew the kindneſs of the Lord unto the Children of him whom he loved; for his mercy is from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him, and his righteouſneſs unto children's children; to ſuch as keep his covenant, and to thoſe that remember his commandments to do them.

And O afflicted Church of Chriſt, wilt thou not be comforted with that word which

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the Lord thy Redeemer ſaith, " in a little wrath I hid my face from the, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee." § The reſidue of the ſpirit, undiminiſhed, is with him, and he can repair the breach (wide as it is) made upon you and give you another paſtor according to his heart. Our Lord expreſſed his tender concern for his mother, pierced thro' her ſoul with the bereaving ſtroke ſhe was then under, by commending her to the care of the diſciple whom he loved. † If ye do what is proper and requiſite to keep yourſelves in the love of God your Saviour, he, who hath ſaid, " whoſoever ſhall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the ſame is my brother, and ſiſter, and mother," will as tenderly provide for you in a bereaved ſtate, and commit you to the care of another diſciple of his, whom he loveth.

AMEN.

§ Iſai. liv. 8. † 1 Joh. xix. 26. 27.